

I was appalled when I read Sinclair Broadcast Group's recent plan to have all their affiliate stations air an anti-Kerry movie as "news." I have long been worried by the ever-larger mergers between banks the last few years, but this is the first time I have truly been worried about the danger to democracy posed by the ever-larger mergers of radio, television and news organizations. Sinclair uses Michael Moore's anti-Bush movie as their "justification," claiming to be merely "balancing" the campaign. They forget one major difference: Moore openly states that he has an agenda, and Moore does not pretend to be an unbiased reporter. How is it fair that Moore's movie was denied airplay on pay-per-view television (ensuring that only those who wanted to see it did so), but Sinclair planned to air the anti-Kerry movie as a purported "public service." Respect for the Presidency is one thing; working hand-in-hand with his reelection committee is another. Isn't it also illegal for a radio or television network?

We keep hearing and reading that "The Media" has a decidedly liberal bent that does not represent Middle America. What I have seen in The Media after 9/11 is something close to abject fear--fear of being branded "traitors" for offering any criticism of the administration, fear of pointing out obvious falsehoods perpetrated by its supporters. It seems that fewer and fewer behemoths are controlling our news, our finances, our very lives. Big Business is King, and we are worse than serfs.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.